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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 10-14 ADS-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 SY-05 SYE-00 DCT-02 HA-06 USSS-00
AID-07 EB-08 /098 W

-----122157 101605Z /20

O 101526Z OCT 80
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4585
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USCINCSO J2 QUARRY HTS PN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
(☒) Release (☐) Excise (☐) Deny
Exemption(s): _____
Declassify: (☐) In Part (☒) In Full
(☐) Classify as _____ (☐) Extend as _____ (☐) Downgrade to _____
Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

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USUN FOR AMBASSADOR WEISSMAN

E.O. 12065: GDS 10/10/86 (FOUCHE, ROBERT M.) OR-P
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PORS, BL
SUBJECT: ALLEGED ARGENTINE DEATH SQUAD AGAINST HERMAN SILES

. ([REDACTED] ENTIRE TEXT)

. UDP SENATOR ELECT FEDERICO ALVAREZ PLATA CAME OUT OF
RIDING BRIEFLY EVENING OF OCTOBER 9 TO MEET URGENTLY
WITH US AT HIS REQUEST. INFORMATION HE WANTED TO
CONVEY IS THAT AN ARGENTINE DEATH SQUAD TRAVELED A FEW DAYS
FROM BOLIVIA TO U.S. -- PRESUMABLY TO NEW YORK -- TO
ASSASSINATE HERNAN SILES. ALVAREZ PLATA SAID UDP SOURCES
LEARNED OF THIS LAST TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7. THEIR SOURCE IS A
MAN WHO WORKS IN BOLIVIAN ARMY INTELLIGENCE.
ACCORDING TO THAT SOURCE, THE ARGENTINES CALLED FROM THE U.S.
TO CONFIRM THEIR ARRIVAL. THE CALL WAS PLACED TO ARMY
COL. FAUSTINO RICO TORO WHO WAS NOT AVAILABLE TO
RECEIVE IT. SOURCE HERSELF TOOK THE CALL INSTEAD, AND

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RECEIVED THE TELEPHONIC CONFIRMATION OF THEIR ARRIVAL.

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ALVAREZ PLATA EXPRESSED HIS HOPE OF OBTAINING NAMES AND NUMBERS, BUT IN THE INTERIM HE WANTED TO CONVEY HIS INFORMATION TO US ON URGENT BASIS.

COMMENT: ALVAREZ PLATA'S INFORMATION IN THE PAST HAS BEEN QUITE GOOD. HE WAS THE FIRST TO INFORM US OF COL. NATUSCH BUSCH'S EFFORTS TO STOP THE JULY 17 COUP AND THE LATTER'S ALLEGED DESIRE TO MAKE AMENDS FOR HIS DISASTROUS TAKEOVER OF LAST NOVEMBER. THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN SUBSEQUENTLY BORNE OUT BY REPORTS FROM INSTITUTIONALIST OFFICERS THAT NATUSCH IS DEALING WITH THEM IN AN EFFORT TO REVERSE THE PRESENT COURSE OF EVENTS IN BOLIVIA AND EFFECT A SALUTARY SUBSTITUTION FOR THE GARCIA MEZA REGIME. OTHER INFORMATION HE HAS PASSED ON HAS BEEN EQUALLY HELPFUL, SO THAT WE ARE NOT INCLINED TO DISMISS THIS AS PURE RUMOR OR GOSSIP.

THE LOGIC OF TRYING TO LIQUIDATE SILES IS NOT CLEAR, BUT THEN VERY LITTLE THIS REGIME HAS DONE APPEARS TO HAVE MADE MUCH SENSE WHEN ITS ACTIONS ARE COMPARED TO WHAT COULD BE ITS OBJECTIVES OF IMPROVING ITS IMAGE, CONSOLIDATING INTERNAL SUPPORT, OBTAINING INTERNATIONAL SYMPATHY, AND TACKLING THE COUNTRY'S MAJOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. HENCE, EVEN THE SEEMINGLY IRRATIONAL ACTIONS OF ARMY G-2 COL. CO TORO AND INTERIOR MINISTER COL. ARCE GOMEZ, WHO OPERATE PRETTY MUCH ON THEIR OWN AUTHORITY, OFTEN OBLIVIOUS TO ANY DIRECTION FROM THE GARCIA MEZA-BERNAL-TERRAZAS GOVERNING TRIUMVIRATE, WE ALSO CANNOT RULE OUT A DECISION TO GO AFTER SILES.

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